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ABSTRACT
By focusing on the question of whether it was right or wrong to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, this social studies unit seeks to illuminate the political, military, scientific, and moral complexities involved in making far-reaching decisions today. Sections of the unit use primary materials from American, Japanese, and English sources to explore the following questions: (1) What was the choice in terms of Japanese versus American lives? (2) Was the A-bomb a military necessity? (3) As the agony of the atomic scientists and the Japanese reaction to the Potsdam Declaration are reviewed in light of recent history, was there a better way to win the war? (4) Was Russia the reason that the United States used the bomb? and (5) Was the use of the A-bomb morally defensible? Included are excerpts from the opinions of atomic scientists, military officers, and political leaders. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (Author/JB)

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EXPERIMENTAL MATERIAL
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TEACHER'S MANUAL

HIROSHIMA:

A STUDY IN SCIENCE, POLITICS AND THE ETHICS OF WAR

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This material has been produced
by the
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NOTE TO THE PUBLIC DOMAIN EDITION

This unit was prepared by the Committee on the Study of History, Amherst College, under contract with the United States Office of Education. It is one of a number of units prepared by the Amherst Project, and was designed to be used either in series with other units from the Project or independently, in conjunction with other materials. While the units were geared initially for college-preparatory students at the high school level, experiments with them by the Amherst Project suggest the adaptability of many of them, either wholly or in part, for a considerable range of age and ability levels, as well as in a number of different kinds of courses.

The units have been used experimentally in selected schools throughout the country, in a wide range of teaching/learning situations. The results of those experiments will be incorporated in the Final Report of the Project on Cooperative Research grant H-168, which will be distributed through ERIC.

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This unit was initially prepared in the summer of 1965

INTRODUCTION

A classroom teacher compiled this unit. Some of the techniques he will probably use with his own students are indicated in this accompanying manual. He hopes you may find some of these ideas helpful, but has no doubt that you will think of other, very possibly better, methods for treating some or perhaps all of the material.

The manual also attempts to explain why particular documents were selected. Also included in the manual is some background material which may come in handy in classroom discussion. The amount of time you decide to devote to the unit will obviously depend on your teaching situation and your interests. The author plans to give it about two weeks.

The central question of the unit is: was it right or wrong to drop the bomb on Hiroshima? The instructional intent of the unit, however, goes beyond that specific issue. By involving the student in a direct confrontation with the raw, living material of one supremely dramatic historical decision, it seeks to make him aware of the complexity of all such decision-making. The student will be immersed in the multi-faceted confusion, the proposals and counter-proposals, the high purpose and the cross-purposes which are the staff of high-level decisions. Thereby, he may gain insight into the infinite ambiguity of the historical process.

There will be a temptation at several points for students to leap prematurely into discussion of the central issue. The danger here is that once students have committed themselves to a point of view in the presence of their classmates, many of them find it difficult to shift ground. For such students, all further reading and discussion would really be pointless, and the whole purpose of the unit would be defeated at the start. It is therefore suggested that you adopt a general policy of postponing all discussion of the central question until the full range of specific issues presented in the unit has been considered.

The unit was conceived as an experience to be lived, not a body of data to be learned. The student should not set himself above and apart from the men, women and children who speak to him in these pages. Let him listen to them, listen well, and he will realize that this is no place for snap yes-or-no judgments. The issues were too intricate and interlocked, the suffering too great on both sides, for that.

Study of the unit on Hiroshima may have yet another result. American youngsters sometimes tend to be callous. Perhaps it is due to the remorseless diet of television violence on which they are fed; perhaps it is because they have lived their whole lives in a world on the brink of the thermonuclear abyss. In

any case, a little humanizing may help. If this unit shakes them up a little, if it arouses their compassion a little, if it makes them see that the decision to exterminate a city was not taken lightly but in torment and regret, out of a convoluted compound of patriotism and politics, scientific genius and humanistic sentiment, the desire to save lives and the desire to destroy lives, assumptions partly true and partly false; if it can do some of this, it may have done a job worth doing.

SECTION I

THE APPARENT CHOICE:

JAPANESE LIVES VS. AMERICAN LIVES

Some of the material in this section will doubtless seem shocking, even harrowing. It is included because a meaningful consideration of the problem requires that students become emotionally involved in the human realities of Hiroshima. By arousing a strong personal reaction at the very start of the unit, the author hopes to provoke the kind of commitment that can contribute not only to students' understanding of history but to their development as individuals as well.

The readings in this section should probably be assigned all at once, rather than piecemeal, so that students have a well-balanced picture before they begin discussion. It need not require more than two evenings, perhaps only one if your students are fast readers. At the same time that you assign the reading, you might inform the students that they are to keep the following question in mind for classroom discussion: How valid as a basis for drawing conclusions is the kind of evidence contained in this section?

The information in the section is the type of data most often made available to the average citizen in wartime. Through our mass media we get lots of "human interest" stories like these, while the deeper and more relevant issues, the more significant facts, are known only to those at the top level until enough time has passed to permit historians to uncover them. Yet public opinion takes shape and exerts potent influence on statesmen even when it has fed on information no more substantial than this.

As the rest of the unit will demonstrate, the "apparent choice" of Section I is to some extent a superficial one, masking other, profounder issues.

On the other hand, this material is not exactly irrelevant. In a sense it can be considered the most relevant of all, for it does present the individual human experience which is the fundamental element of all history. The human factor is obviously indispensable; for it is simply not the only factor.

Accordingly, on the question of the validity and relevance of Section I, it may be advisable to guide students toward the concept of balance in the formulation of conclusions. The author considers the word "balance" as the key to valid discussion of all the issues raised in the unit, and plans to begin orienting students in that direction as early as possible. Here the Socratic method or "devil's advocate" approach is often effective; by challenging, questioning, criticizing students' proposed conclusions, you can impel a deeper consideration of the issues involved.

If you wish to assign a short paper at the same time that you assign the readings in Section I, you might require your students to discuss the problem in some such terms as these: If they knew no more about Hiroshima than this section tells them, would they know enough to make an intelligent decision. If not, what other kind of information would they need?

Another assignment which might enrich subsequent discussion of Section I would be to have students conduct an inquiry among their parents and other older relatives and friends, as to how they felt about Hiroshima at the time. Students should also try to obtain from these people some indication as to how much they really knew about the factors involved in the decision to drop the bomb and about the effects of the bomb.

The material in Part A raises another intriguing question relating to the validity of evidence. Here was a group of youngsters asked to recall an event that had happened six years earlier, six years which for many represented a substantial slice of their entire lives. Some of them had been extremely young in 1945. How reliable is their testimony? May it not be exaggerated, distorted, colored by information acquired subsequent to the event? One way for students to check this might be to compare the effects described by the children with those described in the Atomic Energy Commission data. They may also be able to bring their own personal experience to bear on this question of the accuracy of childhood memories.

A worthwhile topic of research for interested students is the "Hiroshima Maidens" project. This was an American-financed philanthropic venture in which a number of badly scarred Japanese girls, such as the one in the last selection of the children's recollections, were brought to this country in the 1950's for plastic surgery. A 1964 article in the Saturday Review by Norman Cousins, a sponsor of the project, showed that by that time most of the "Maidens" had married, raised children and were apparently living reasonably normal lives. Another topic of research might also be the poignant story of the "Girl of the Paper Cranes" recounted in the New York Times Magazine, August 1, 1965.

The material in Part B also provides the basis for stimulating discussion. A feature of the Japanese mentality which often intrigues young Americans is its acceptance of suicide, as exemplified by the kamikaze fliers and other types of suicidal missions described in this section. One possible theme, either for

discussion or for a short paper might be: "The Kamikaze Mind: Savage Oriental Fanaticism or Highest Form of Patriotism?" A relevant area of research would center on whether suicide in battle is as completely alien to Americans as is commonly thought. You will doubtless think of some examples from our history; I'll only suggest a hunt through such magnificent works as Samuel Eliot Morison's History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II (for example, the section describing our carrier pilots' actions in the Battle of Midway, in Volume Four).

One final note about Section I. If students complete their consideration of it with the beginnings of an awareness that the apparently simple "choice" of the section's title really conceals a good many complexities, and that perhaps there are no really simple choices in historical situations of this kind, the material will have fulfilled its purpose.

SECTION II

WAS THE USE OF THE A-BOMB A MILITARY NECESSITY?

In this section more than any other, students are likely to leap to premature judgments on the question posed in the title. Again, it cannot be overemphasized that the material here is intended not merely to supply a documentary basis for judgments but more importantly to promote an awareness of the intricacy of the problem.

To some students it may come as something of a disillusionment that our country's supreme military and naval commanders could be in such total disagreement on questions of strategy. Discussion will be most useful if it postpones as long as possible the "choosing of sides" and focuses instead on the more fruitful question of why such disagreements arise. For many students the comprehension that the different military services tend to view strategic problems in diametrically opposed terms may serve as a useful discovery. This problem would seem well suited to a short written assignment.

The Stimson statement can be rewarding not only for its content but also for what it reveals of the man. Stimson will appear again and again in this unit, for it is no exaggeration to say that he shaped the decision to use the bomb more than any other individual. In its painstaking marshaling of the facts and eloquent defense of the decision, his statement towers over any other justification written at the time or since. The sensitive reader will discern the agonies Stimson suffered, and it will be worthwhile for students to discover that the man who bears so much of the responsibility for Hiroshima was a man of conscience.

Several of the statements by the military leaders are drawn from the crucial meeting of June 18, 1945. This session provides a fascinating example of the way great decisions sometimes take shape, more by accidental combinations of circumstances than by design. President Truman had been in office only two months and was still struggling to find his way amid the myriad responsibilities that had so suddenly become his. He asked his top military advisers to explain their plans for final victory over Japan. The evidence shows that he did not get a frank and full discussion. Leahy, King and Arnold had previously stated their objections to the planned invasion of Japan, but at this meeting they allowed Truman to gain the impression they now all favored it. And when he gave final approval to the dropping of the bomb, it was precisely because he was so concerned about the heavy casualties the invasion would cause. At first glance, the commanders' lack of candor with the President would seem censurable. Before students take this tempting plunge, however, they should study the statements closely; all that the commanders thought they were doing was to order that plans be started for an invasion that was still almost five months away and which might not prove necessary. The instructive point of all this is that there is less profit in attempting to place blame than in making an objective analysis of historical processes.

The Churchill excerpt emphasizes two points: 1) it clearly buttresses that side of the military argument favoring use of the bomb; 2) it also raises doubts as to whether the Americans actually gave as careful consideration as they have sometimes claimed to possible alternatives to use of the bomb. Students may be led to compare Churchill's description of the discussions at Potsdam with Stimson's claims that the bomb was to be dropped only after all other possible avenues to victory had been explored. This is an aspect of the problem that will arise again in the next section.

Several good springboards for discussion may be found among Japanese documents of Part C. First, which of the Allied leaders' estimates do they support? A superficial reading may convey the impression that they "prove" the Japanese were defenseless and on the brink of collapse. Certainly they do favor that hypothesis; but the question is, do they prove it? Several areas of inquiry should be tapped before students form any final opinions.

There is at least one interesting comparison to be made, which strengthens the brink-of-collapse theory. Have your students compare the factual statement made here about Japan's dwindling supply of aviation fuel, with the boastful statements of the Japanese Air Force generals in Section I. After all, even kamikaze pilots have to have gasoline in their fuel tanks.

But on the other hand how much of the information contained in these documents can the Allied leaders have been expected to know? Does this evidence justify sneering at American generals who thought they had to use atomic bombs against a nation that was apparently preparing to defend itself with bamboo spears?

This will be an appropriate moment to discuss the responsibility students bear to consider problems in their historical context not with the unscholarly advantage of hindsight. What the Americans actually knew about Japanese military capabilities, based on the intelligence data available to them, has already been indicated in the Stimson statement and in other documents. Whether or not the information in the possession of the Americans was accurate or not, the decision had to be made on the basis of what they knew then, not what we know now.

Students should also consider whether the documents supply conclusive proof that the Japanese were incapable of inflicting heavy casualties on an American invading force. It can be argued that the evidence is in fact limited to showing that the Japanese were in dire economic difficulty and had no chance of victory, an entirely different point.

Similar questions may be raised about the Strategic Bombing Survey's report. Bases as it is on information gathered inside Japan after the war, to what extent can this document be taken as a reflection on wartime judgments made from the outside?

In sum, it is clear that the Allied leaders did overestimate Japan's military strength. But the enlightening discovery that students may gain from this section is the extent to which great decisions are based not so much on facts themselves as on men's assumptions about these facts.

If you wish to have students write a short paper on the problems raised in this section, probably the obvious topic would be the section's title. Earlier we cautioned against encouraging premature judgments on this issue, but after your students have studied and discussed the question in all its broader aspects there would seem to exist no reason for forbidding any who may be interested in military problems from attempting to formulate a balanced, comprehensive opinion. Another topic might be "The Role of Assumptions in Great Decisions."

SECTION III

WAS THERE A BETTER WAY TO WIN THE WAR?

This section deals with two great "ifs" of World War II:

"If we had explicitly warned the Japanese about the atomic bomb and even demonstrated its power to them in some spectacular but harmless manner . . . "

and

"If we had given the Japanese the assurance that we would

allow their Emperor, a revered religious symbol as well as their head of state, to remain on his throne . . ."

then, so the theories run, the Japanese would have capitulated, and we would never have had to use the bomb on a great living city.

The fascination of these speculations is apparent in the seemingly endless stream of books, essays, monographs, dissertations, analyses and re-analyses by participants, by diplomatic experts, political scientists, atomic scientists, journalists, orientalists, historians, in short by scholars and commentators of every description. And the subject is worth the attention it receives. It embodies invaluable lessons on the nature of the decision-making process, and furnishes useful insights that can be applied to decisions of the present and the future.

Before students speculate on the plausibility of the two "ifs," however, they should be encouraged to explore a number of other relevant questions.

Part A in particular presents problems of special urgency for the world of today. In our age of ceaselessly expanding scientific revolution, in which science is affecting the lives of individuals and nations as never before, there may be no subject more vital for future citizens to master than the relations between science and society. This problem should by no means interest only science-oriented students, for every student will one day participate as a citizen in public decisions that will affect, and be affected by, the advance of science.

Related to these general considerations is a specific problem arising directly out of the documents in Part A. The Franck Report and the other scientists' proposals described here venture far beyond strictly scientific matters. They offer judgments and predictions about military, political and diplomatic effects. But in these areas, scientists are no more competent than other informed citizens. It is true that at the time the Franck Report and the other petitions urging the warning demonstration were written, these men did have special knowledge in that they were part of a project which was a closely guarded secret from the rest of the world. Still, the question remains: How much reliance can be placed on the judgments in these documents? One way to get students thinking in this direction might be to have some of them prepare a report on the extent to which the dire predictions in the Franck Report have come true.

Here is a set of broad, wide-ranging questions suggested by the material in Part A, which you may wish to use either in classroom discussion or for essay topics:

1. Do scientists have special rights and responsibilities as to the uses society makes of their discoveries? What are the limits of these rights and responsibilities? To what extent should political and military leaders heed the views of scientists?

2. What conclusions can be drawn from the material presented in Part A, and from your own knowledge, as to the relationships between:

a) science and politics;

b) science and internationalism;

c) science and war.

3. Considering the problems that arose out of the development of the atomic bomb and adding what you know of the accelerated advance of science since World War II, what new obligations have become incumbent upon the informed citizen in a 20th-century democratic society?

Certain other aspects of the subject might best be assigned to science-minded students. For example, a report on the half-century of revolutionary progress in nuclear physics which culminated in the atomic bomb, if presented in clear, understandable layman's terms, would add to the understanding your class has of that era and doubtless fill a lamentable void in most students' knowledge. Similarly, a good clear description of how an atomic bomb actually works could be of strong interest. Incidentally, you might consider having one of your school's physics teachers, or possibly some suitable qualified person from your community or from some neighboring college, do a guest presentation on these specialized subjects.

At this point you may find it helpful to have before you some indication of scholarly opinion as to the potential effectiveness of the prior warning or demonstration of the effectiveness of the bomb. Here, for example, is Herbert Feis's conclusion in his study, Japan Subdued:[1]

> /Feis concluded that a prior warning might have caused the Japanese to surrender almost as soon as it did, but this seemed to be "remote and unreal" at the time. He still regrets that a clearer revelation of the weapon was not made in the Potsdam Declaration./

Part B affords another opportunity for discussion of the sometimes astonishing ways in which historical decisions are made. Here was a proposal strongly advocated by those American exports who knew Japan and the Japanese best, approved by the military, by Stimson, Forrestal and even Truman. Yet it was never tried. First it kept getting postponed and then, at the very last moment, Byrnes was persuaded to put it off again, until after the Potsdam Declaration was issued. Byrnes' position carried the day and a much vaguer statement about the future Japanese government was inserted into the Declaration.

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[1]Herbert Feis, Japan Subdued (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1961), 186.

Here again, the question arises: would an explicit reassurance on the retention of the Emperor have had any effect on Japanese capitulation? And again, it is unanswerable except in probabilities. The documents included in Part B provide food for this discussion. For your additional information here is Professor Feis's summation on this point.[2]

> /Feis argues that a declaration that promised to keep the Emperor intact after the war would not by itself have caused an earlier surrender, but that such an offer plus a Soviet statement indicating its intention of entering the war against Japan might have brought on an early surrender. He doubts, however, that the Soviet government would have made such a declaration./

Part C can provide a testing-ground of students' ability to apply the knowledge gained from Parts A and B. They might first be required to determine the extent to which the two proposals were incorporated into the Potsdam Declaration, both having been incorporated, but in vague terms. Students might then examine Togo's recollections for indications as to whether the Japanese would have responded differently if the Declaration had included either or both of the two proposals. There would seem to be strong evidence within the Togo document that the reassurance about the Emperor would at the very least have strengthened the hand of those who were advocating peace and might even have led to an affirmative result. But there is no evidence whatsoever in this document which either supports or refutes the claims made for effective prior warning and demonstration of the bomb. The possible results of this can only be surmised.

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[2] Ibid., 175-176.

SECTION IV

WAS RUSSIA THE REAL TARGET?

Two questions seem fundamental here:

1. Does the evidence support the charge? Does it prove that Hiroshima actually was not so much the last blow in World War II as the first blow in the Cold War?

2. Supposing that the charge were true--even if it were only partly true--*should* we have used the bomb on Hiroshima if it helped make the Russians "more manageable," in Byrnes's words?

In discussing the first question, it will quickly become obvious that many American leaders were increasingly wary and suspicious of the Russians as the war drew to a close. There is really no question about this point, and it need hardly occupy much class time. But it is a big leap and a risky one to the conclusion that use of the bomb derived primarily from this widespread American attitude.

This provides a useful lesson on the question of circumstantial vs. direct or conclusive evidence. The evidence supporting the anti-Soviet charge is undeniably strong, and some of it is almost direct evidence: i.e., when Stimson writes that he hoped our possession and use of the bomb might help force changes in the Soviet state, or the numerous statements opposing Soviet participation in the war. These could be used to back the assertion that we used the atomic bomb to force a Japanese surrender before the Russians were ready for war in the Far East. But do they *prove* the assertion? Or might the most tenable conclusion be the ancient Scottish verdict: neither guilty nor not guilty, but "not proven."

The consensus of recent scholarship seems to be that the emerging anti-Soviet feelings of 1945 did play a role in the decision to use the bomb, that the decision was partly motivated thereby. It would be just as unwarranted to claim that hostility to Russia had nothing to do with it as to say the opposite.

The second question suggested for discussion is entirely different: a call for opinions as to what American foreign policy *should* or *should not* have been in 1945, not a call for judgments as to what it actually *was*. Hence there may be a tendency for students to throw unfounded personal opinions about somewhat recklessly. They probably should be allowed some leeway in a discussion of this kind, but reasonably sound logic and solid evidence for their opinions can still be required.

SECTION V

WAS IT A MORALLY DEFENSIBLE ACT?

If the experience of the teacher who compiled this unit is any guide, high-school students, properly approached, can be extremely serious about moral problems. Penetrate the superficial attitudes of flippancy and cynicism, and one finds that the teen-age years are very often years of earnest philosophical groping. A well-conducted session on an ethical problem can evoke a more ardent response than almost any other type of discussion.

Hiroshima is spectacularly well suited for this purpose. This overwhelming human drama offers a fine opportunity to help students toward a profounder realization of their own beliefs, toward a more penetrating insight into the human condition, and hence toward maturity.

Section V confronts students with the problem of moral relativism, using Hiroshima as a specific case. Part A constitutes the basic presentation of the problem. Parts B, C and D provide materials for application to the problem, either in classroom discussion or in the preparation of written assignments.

Simply stated, the problem is whether changes in historical circumstances justify changes in ethical standards. Does the fact that Hiroshima was preceded by almost a decade of relentlessly intensifying aerial attacks upon cities and indiscriminate slaughter of non-combatants somehow excuse the dropping of the atomic bomb? Further, does the fact that the end in view was seemingly moral (shortening the war and saving lives) justify the means used? And finally, are tenable grounds for the defense of the decision taken by the statesmen provided by the fact that the American public harbored extremely harsh feelings towards the Japanese, as shown by the Fortune poll and by the song, and that therefore American statesmen were under pressure from a vindictive public opinion?

Batchelder, whose book is the only extended study published this far of the ethical aspects of the Hiroshima problem, seems to answer these questions with a reluctant affirmative. The Roman Catholic attitude toward Hiroshima is more stringent, as Pope Paul's statement indicates.

The public-opinion poll, President Truman's statement and some of the other documents in this section raise another pertinent moral question, that of revenge and punishment. After all it was the Japanese who started the war with a sneak attack, who committed open aggression against neighboring countries, and who perpetrated numerous atrocities against Americans and others during the war. The official American attitude is that we were punishing criminal behavior. The moral question to be resolved here is whether the punishment fit the crime. A related political

question is the role in the formulation of foreign policy played by emotional attitudes, such as the desire for revenge. There is little doubt that the Japanese would have used the atomic bomb against us if they had had the opportunity; does that justify our using it against them?

One effective method of resolving all of these problems and impelling your students to formulate and defend their own final conclusions might be to poll their opinions, using the questions in the Fortune Survey. The poll might either be conducted in class, with students required to defend their votes orally, or it might be given as a written assignment, with more formal statements required. In presenting their arguments students could use the documents in this section or might be expected to seek additional material elsewhere.

A comparison of your students' responses to the poll with those of the generation that had experienced World War II can provide a stimulating conclusion to the entire unit. Certainly it is worthy to note that fully three quarters of the Americans polled in 1945 approved use of the bomb, and that over a third of those who approved wanted Japan punished even more severely. Fewer than one person in five manifested any moral compunctions about Hiroshima, and fewer than one in twenty opposed use of the bomb under any circumstances. Your students will, of course, have enjoyed a tremendous advantage over the American public of 1945, for they will have had before them for discussion and reflection, sources of information which were not available when the poll was originally taken. The difference in viewpoint should be fascinating.

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STUDENT'S MANUAL

HIROSHIMA:

A STUDY IN SCIENCE, POLITICS AND THE ETHICS OF WAR

Jonathan Harris
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Port Washington, New York

This material has been produced
by the
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INTRODUCTION

Americans tend to react to the awesome fact of Hiroshima in either of two ways. Some are so revolted that they automatically condemn all who had anything to do with perpetrating such horror. Others, equally unthinking, accept it as an act of war like any other, brutal perhaps, but necessary.

The problem of Hiroshima is too complex for such simple answers. It is a military problem, a political problem, a scientific problem, an ethical problem, and above all a tragic human problem, not only for those who were its victims but more importantly for all the rest of us who were not. Whatever judgment we may finally reach as to the justice or injustice of the atomic holocaust at Hiroshima, we owe it to ourselves to do more than judge. We must try to understand.

This unit takes you back to that climactic time in World War II when the decision to drop the atomic bomb was still in the making. It involves you in the dire urgency, the fantastic complexity of the problems that pressed down upon the men who bore the grim responsibility of decision. It may seem easy and tempting to suggest answers to their problems from the comfortable vantagepoint of the present. The question will have more meaning if you make the effort to place yourself within the complicated and chaotic context of those war years, when these problems loomed agonizingly real.

SECTION I

THE APPARENT CHOICE:

JAPANESE LIVES VS. AMERICAN LIVES

It is difficult for some Americans to consider the Hiroshima problem dispassionately, because of the overwhelming human factors involved. You may therefore find it helpful to dispose of these emotion-charged aspects by deciding at the very outset how much importance they deserve in the formation of your final conclusion.

This section consists of two contrasting parts. Part A tells what happened to the people of Hiroshima. Part B focuses on the other side of the story, indicating what might have awaited America's fighting men had we not used the atomic bomb.

A. The Price Hiroshima Paid

1. In 1951 Dr. Arata Osada, a distinguished Japanese educator, asked the young people of Hiroshima to write out their personal memories of that day six years earlier, when the atomic bomb destroyed their city. A brief sampling of portions of their vivid recollections follows:[1]

> /Young boys and girls who were in Hiroshima at the time the A-bomb was dropped on the city describe in shocking detail the horrible personal experiences that resulted from the atomic explosion./

2. Here, in clinically accurate detail, are the facts about the physical effects of the atomic bomb on the people of Hiroshima, as

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[1] Children of the A-Bomb: Testament of the Boys and Girls of Hiroshima, compiled by Dr. Arata Osada (English edition, translated by Jean Dan and Ruth Sieben-Morgan, Uchida Rokakuho Publishing House, Tokyo, 1959), 7-9, 237, 271-278 passim, 288-291 passim, 352-357 passim.

determined by American and Japanese scientists during fifteen years of research:[2]

> The three main types of physical effects associated with a nuclear explosion, namely, blast and shock, thermal radiation, and nuclear radiation, each have the potentiality for causing death and injury to exposed persons. . . .
>
> The frequency of burn injuries due to a nuclear explosion is exceptionally high. Most of these are flash burns caused by direct exposure to the thermal radiation, although individuals trapped by spreading fires may be subjected to flame burns. In addition, persons in buildings or tunnels close to ground zero[3] may be burned by hot gases and dust entering the structure even though they are shielded adequately from direct or scattered thermal radiation. Finally, mention must be made of the harmful effects of the nuclear radiations on the body. These represent a source of casualties entirely new to warfare. . . .
>
> Some 95 percent of the population within a half mile from ground zero were casualties. . . . Beyond about 1.5 miles, however, the chances of survival were very greatly improved. Between 0.5 and 1.5 miles from ground zero a larger proportion of the population would probably have survived if immediate medical attention had been available. . . .
>
> It was estimated that 20 to 30 percent of the fatal casualties in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were caused by flash burns. In the former city alone, some 40,000 fairly serious burn cases were reported. Apart from other injuries, thermal radiation burns would have been fatal to nearly all persons in the open, without appreciable protection, at distances up to 6,000 feet (1.1 miles) or more from ground zero. Even as far out as 12,000 to 14,000 feet (2.2 to 2.6 miles), there were instances of such burns which were bad enough to require treatment. . . .
>
> There are a number of consequences of nuclear radiation which may not appear for some years after exposure. Among them, apart from genetic effects, are the formation of cataracts, non-specific life shortening, leukemia, other forms of malignant disease, and retarded development of children _in utero_[4] at the time of exposure. . . .

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[2]Samuel Glasstone (ed.), _The Effects of Nuclear Explosions_ (U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, Washington, D. C., 1962), 547, 551, 565, 598, 599, 600, 601.

[3]"Ground zero" is the point on the ground directly below the explosion. At Hiroshima the bomb was dropped from an altitude of about 31,000 feet and timed to explode at about 2,000 feet, so that maximum effect was achieved and as little as possible of the bomb's energy was dissipated into the ground. [Editor's note]

[4]In the embryonic state. [Editor's note]

The first definite evidence of an increase in the incidence of leukemia cases among the inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was obtained in 1947. The peak apparently occurred between 1950 and 1952, and the incidence has subsequently decreased. . . .

A special research initiated in 1957 in Hiroshima, to compare the frequency of malignant neoplasms,[5] other than leukemia, in people exposed within about a mile of ground zero in 1945 with the incidence in unexposed populations, has yielded some interesting information. Although the study covers only a two-year period, the results suggest a two- to four-fold increase over the expected frequency for neoplastic disease in some organs (lung, stomach, breast, and ovary) in exposed persons. . . .

Among the mothers who were pregnant at the time of the nuclear explosions in Japan, and who received sufficiently large doses to show the usual radiation symptoms, there was marked increase over normal in the number of still-births and in the deaths of newly born and infant children. A study of the surviving children made 4 or 5 years later showed a slightly increased frequency of mental retardation. . . . Maldevelopment of the teeth, attributed to injury at the roots, was also noted in many of the children.

A comparison made about 1952 of exposed children, whose ages ranged from less than 1 to about 14 years at the time of the explosions, with unexposed children of the same age, showed that the former had somewhat lower average body weight and were less advanced in stature and sexual maturity. . . .

3. Physical damage was not the only kind suffered by the people of Hiroshima. This report was written twenty years after the bombing:[6]

> /The article describes the psychological and physical problems of the people, called the hibakusha, who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. They suffer from prejudiced treatment in trying to get jobs or matrimonial attachments because of possible physical and mental impairments and many make attempts to keep their identification as hibakusha secret despite the fact that they can receive free medical care if they register as hibakusha./

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[5] Cancers and tumors. /Editor's note./

[6] A. M. Rosenthal, "The Taste of Life in Hiroshima Now," The New York Times Magazine (Aug. 1, 1965), 30, 32-35.

B. The Price Americans Paid - And Might Have Paid

1. General Marshall describes Japanese fanaticism in the last battles of the war:[7]

In the Philippines campaign U. S. forces first met the full fury of the kamikaze or suicide attacks, but at Okinawa the Japanese procedure was better organized and involved larger numbers of planes; also the Baka plane appeared, something quite new and deadly. This small, short range, rocket-accelerated aircraft, carried more than a ton of explosives in its warhead. It was designed to be carried to the attack, slung beneath a medium bomber, then directed in a rocket-assisted dive to the target by its suicide pilot. . . .

The pattern of fanatical resistance continued in the southern-most tip of the island. Each successive strong point was cleared only by heroic efforts of our soldiers and marines. By the end of June we had suffered 39,000 casualties in the Okinawa campaign, which included losses of over 10,000 among naval personnel of the supporting fleet. By the same date, 109,629 Japanese had been killed. . . .

2. The battle of Okinawa (April-June, 1945) was planned as the last step before the invasion of Japan. It turned out to be the last battle of the war. This excerpt is taken from the official U. S. Army history:[8]

In Kerma Retto[9]. . . the Japanese tradition of self-destruction emerged horribly in the last acts of soldiers and civilians trapped in the hills. Camping for the night of 28 March a mile from the north tip of Tokashiki,[10] troops of the 306th[11] heard explosions and screams of pain in the distance. In the morning they found a small valley littered with more than 150 dead and dying Japanese, most of them civilians.

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[7]George C. Marshall, Biennial Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army to the Secretary of War, July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1945 (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1945), 83.

[8]Roy E. Appleman, James M. Burns, Russell A. Gugeler, John Stevens, Okinawa: The Last Battle, United States Army in World War II (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1948), 58, 60, 384-386.

[9]A group of smaller islands 15 miles west of Okinawa. [Editor's note]

[10]The island closest to Okinawa. [Editor's note]

[11]306th Infantry Regiment, U. S. 77th Division. [Editor's note]

Fathers had systematically throttled each member of their families and then disemboweled themselves with knives or hand grenades. Under one blanket lay a father, two small children, a grandfather, and a grandmother, all strangled with cloth ropes. Soldiers and medics did what they could. The natives, who had been told that the invading "barbarians" would kill and rape, watched with amazement as the Americans provided food and medical care; an old man who had killed his daughter wept in bitter remorse. . . .

More than 350 suicide boats were captured and destroyed by the 77th in the Kerama Islands. . . . According to captured instructions, three boats would attack a ship simultaneously, each seeking a vital spot to release its charge. . . . /the/ pilots were promoted two grades upon assignment and received preferential treatment. After completion of their missions they were to receive promotion to second lieutenant; obviously, most such promotions would be posthumous. . . .

Nothing illustrates so well the great difference between the fighting in the Pacific and that in Europe as the small number of military prisoners taken on Okinawa. At the end of May the III Amphibious Corps had captured only 128 Japanese soldiers. At the same time, after two months of fighting in southern Okinawa, the four divisions of the XXIV Corps had taken only 90 military prisoners. The 77th Division, which had been in the center of the line . . . had taken only 9 during all that time. Most of the enemy taken prisoner either were badly wounded or were unconscious; they could not prevent capture or commit suicide before falling into American hands.

In the light of these prisoner figures there is no question as to the state of Japanese morale. The Japanese soldier fought until he was killed. There was only one kind of Japanese casualty--the dead. . . .

Casualties on the American side were the heaviest of the Pacific war. . . .

Nonbattle casualties were numerous, a large percentage of them being neuropsychiatric or "combat fatigue" cases. . . . The most important cause of this was unquestionably the great amount of enemy artillery and mortar fire, the heaviest concentrations experienced in the Pacific War. Another cause of men's nerves giving way was the unending close-in battle with a fanatical foe. The rate of psychiatric cases was probably higher on Okinawa than in any previous operation in the Pacific.

3. From the semi-official U. S. Navy history of the Okinawa campaign:[12]

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[12]Samuel Eliot Morison, Victory in the Pacific 1945, Vol. XIV of History of United States Naval Operations in World War II (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1961), 233, 239, 280, 282.

/The suicidal Japanese Kamikaze missions' destructive impact on the U. S. Navy's forces in the Okinawa campaign is described. The Kamikaze attacks caused heavier losses than were incurred in any other naval campaign in the war, and the anticipation of more "was disquieting."/

4. Two high officers of the Japanese air force explained their planned reliance on the kamikaze against the planned American invasion of Japan:[13]

Lieutenant General Tazoe[14]. . .

"The air force plan was to attack the Allied fleet by Kamikaze planes, and for that purpose the full air force led by the commanding general was made ready to destroy the Allied ships near the shore. We expected annihilation of our entire air force, but we felt that it was our duty. The army and navy each had 4,000-5,000 planes for this purpose. Of that force, waves of 300-400 planes at the rate of one wave per hour for each of the army and navy would have been used to oppose a landing on Kyushu.[15]

"We thought we could win the war by using Kamikaze planes on the ships offshore; the ground forces would handle those which got through. The army could not put out effective resistance without the air arm, but we intended doing the best we could even if we perished. The entire navy and army air forces volunteered as Kamikaze and there was sufficient fuel for these attacks.

"Based on the Leyte and Okinawa experiences, it was contemplated that one out of four planes (of the 8,000-9,000 available for special attack) would sink or damage an Allied ship. . . .

"The air general army had been following a policy of conserving aircraft for the purpose of countering the expected invasion. . . . We had 5,000 pilots with enough experience for special attack against invasion and 3,000 more in training... . ."

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[13]Assistant Chief of Air Staff - Intelligence, Headquarters, Army Air Forces, Mission Accomplished: Interrogations of Japanese Industrial Military and Civil Leaders of World War II (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1946), 34-35.

[14]Lt. Gen. Noburu Tazoe was Chief of Staff, Air General Army (equivalent to our Army Air Force). /Editor's note/

[15]The southernmost island of Japan. If Japan had not surrendered, Kyushu was scheduled for invasion in November, 1945. /Editor's note/

General Kawabe[16]. . .

"I know that you in the United States found it more difficult to manufacture crews than planes and did everything possible to rescue the crews, but our strategy was aimed solely at the destruction of your fleet, and transport fleet when it landed in Japan. It was not very difficult to manufacture second-rate planes, that is, makeshift planes, and it was not difficult to train pilots for just such a duty; and since pilots were willing, we had no shortage of volunteers. . . .

"But, I wish to explain something, which is very difficult thing and which you may not be able to understand. The Japanese to the very end, believed that by spiritual means they could fight on equal terms with you, yet by any other comparison it would not appear equal. We believed our spiritual confidences in victory would balance any scientific advantages and we had no intention of giving up the fight. . . .

"You call our Kamikaze attacks "suicide" attacks. This is a misnomer and we feel very badly about your calling them "suicide" attacks. They were in no sense "suicide." The pilot did not start out on his mission with the intention of committing suicide. He looked upon himself as a human bomb which would destroy a certain part of the enemy fleet for his country. They considered it a glorious thing, while suicide may not be so glorious."

5. A kamikaze pilot writes his last letter home:[17]

/The letter indicates a desire to show bravery, patriotic fervor, and affection toward family./

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[16]Lt. Gen. Masakazu Kawabe was Commanding General, Air General Army and Director of Kamikaze Operations, Philippines and Okinawa Campaigns. /Editor's note/

[17]Desmond Flower and Edmund Reeves (eds.), The War 1939-1945 (Cassell & Company Ltd., London, 1960), 743.

SECTION II

WAS USE OF THE A-BOMB A MILITARY NECESSITY?

A. Judgments by Americans

In the spring and summer of 1945, as the war approached its final stages, a momentous controversy boiled up among America's military leaders. The Army on one side, and the Navy and Air Force on the other, put forth opposing views as to the best way to defeat Japan. The question as to whether or not we would use the atomic bomb depended on the outcome of this dispute.

1. The Army's view is presented by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. He had rendered distinguished service to a number of Presidents, both Republican and Democratic, before the war. As Secretary of War under Roosevelt and Truman, he was one of the few political figures who participated in every phase of the planning and direction of the atomic bomb project. There is little doubt that Stimson's opinion, strongly supported by the Army's Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, carried more weight in Washington than that of any other official except perhaps the President.

The following detailed analysis by Stimson appeared in 1947:[1]

> /Stimson explains the use of the atomic bomb as the best means, considering the circumstances he describes, of achieving his chief purpose of gaining victory for the United States with the least possible cost in lives./

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[1]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1947), 617, 618-619, 624, 625-626, 627, 631-632, 633.

2. At a meeting with the President on June 18, 1945, the Army's Chief of Staff expounds the necessity of invading Japan:[2]

> General Marshall said that it was his personal view that the operation against Kyushu was the only course to pursue. He felt that air power alone was not sufficient to put the Japanese out of the war. It was unable to put the Germans out . . . . Against the Japanese, scattered through mountainous country, the problem would be much more difficult than it had been against Germany. He felt that this plan offered the only way the Japanese could be forced into a feeling of utter helplessness.

3. General Douglas MacArthur was the Army's top field commander in the Pacific throughout World War II. His recommendations to his immediate superior, General Marshall, played an important role in the over-all planning of operations against Japan:[3]

> /MacArthur indicates that the Japanese were on the verge of "collapse and surrender" at the end of the Phillipine campaign and he recommended a direct attack on the Japanese mainland. He also claims a lack of knowledge of the atomic bomb until "just prior to the attack on Hiroshima."/

4. Senior officers of the U. S. Navy dissented from Stimson's, Marshall's and MacArthur's recommendations. Admiral William D. Leahy had been Chief of Naval Operations before the war, and served from 1942 to 1945 as personal military adviser to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman. In his memoirs Leahy states:[4]

> /Leahy argues that Japan would have eventually surrendered, at the cost of the fewest lives, with the naval blockade and that neither an invasion nor the dropping of the atomic bomb were necessary to gain victory./

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[2]U. S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conference of Berlin (Potsdam) 1945 (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1960) I, 906. (This source is referred to hereafter as Potsdam Papers.)

[3]Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences (McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1964), 260-261, 262.

[4]William D. Leahy, I Was There (Whittlesey House, New York, 1950), 259, 384-385, 441.

5. If, as Leahy claims, the victory over Japan was primarily a naval victory, then no man bore a greater responsibility for it than Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations from 1941 to 1945. Here King sheds a revealing light upon the decision-making process:[5]

> /King also indicates an opposition to an invasion and feels the President and Army underestimated the potential of a naval blockade for bringing about victory./

6. General H. H. Arnold commanded the Army Air Force in World War II. Not surprisingly, his reasons for disagreeing with the Army's views are different from those of the naval commanders:[6]

> /Arnold contends that conventional bombing might very well have caused the Japanese to surrender and that, in any case, it was a major factor in the eventual surrender./

7. The ultimate choice rested in the hands of President Harry S. Truman, Although he relied heavily on the advice of Stimson and Marshall, Truman has always accepted full responsibility for the final decision to use the atomic bomb. Here, in his typically emphatic manner, he states the overriding considerations that determined his decision:[7]

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[5]Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehill, Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record (W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1952), 598, 621.

[6]H. H. Arnold, Global Mission (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1949), 595, 596, 598.

[7]Letter, Truman to Prof. J. L. Cate, January 12, 1953, cited in Wesley F. Craven and James L. Cate, eds., The Army Air Forces in World War II, Vol. V, The Pacific: Matterhorn to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945 (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953), 712-713.

/Truman recounts his calling of a meeting of his advisors to decide "what should be done with this awful weapon." After being advised that an invasion would cost between 250,000 and 1,000,000 American lives, he decided to drop the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki if the Japanese rejected an ultimatum. He asserts that his decision "ended the war, saved lives."/

B. Judgment from Britain

Among those consulted on the decision to use the atomic bomb, none was more universally respected than Prime Minister Winston Churchill. The discussions he describes in the following excerpt took place during the Potsdam Conference, near Berlin:[8]

/Churchill claims that the decision to use the bomb was never questioned by the British and that it was the right decision since it brought a speedy end to the war and saved the American and British lives that would have been lost in an invasion./

C. Judgments from Japan

How accurate were Allied estimates of Japan's ability to continue the war? The material presented here reflects the actual situation in Japan during the war's final months. Since it comes from sources inside Japan, it was of course not available to Americans until after the war.

1. In April, 1945, the aged Admiral Baron Kantaro Suzuki was appointed Prime Minister of Japan, with explicit instructions from the Emperor to find some honorable way to end the war. One of Suzuki's first actions was to order his chief cabinet secretary to carry out a detailed survey of the Japanese war economy. Here are the highlights of his

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[8]Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1953), 637-639.

secretary's report, depicting the situation in early June, 1945.[9]

A. General

The ominous turn of the war, coupled with the increasing tempo of air raids is bringing about great disruption of land and sea communications and essential war production. The food situation was worsened. It has become increasingly difficult to meet the requirements of total war. Moreover, it has become necessary to pay careful attention to the trends in public sentiment.

B. National Trends in General

Morale is high, but there is dissatisfaction with the present regime. Criticisms of the government and the military are increasing. The people are losing confidence in their leaders, and the gloomy omen of deterioration of public morale is present. The spirit of public sacrifice is lagging and among leading intellectuals there are some who advocate peace negotiations as a way out. . . .

C. Manpower

1. As compared with material resources, there is a relative surplus of manpower, but there is no efficient exploitation of it. . . .

2. The physical standard and birth rate of the people are on the down grade. . . .

D. Transportation and Communication

Transportation is faced with insurmountable difficulties because of fuel shortages, mounting fury of enemy attacks on our lines of communications, and insufficient manpower in cargo handling. . . .

Transport capacity of the railways will drop to half that of the previous year due to the enemy air attack and our inability to maintain construction and repairs on an efficient level. It is feared that railway transportation will become confined to local areas. . . .

E. Material Resources . . .

There is a strong possibility that a considerable portion of the various industrial areas will have to suspend operation for lack of coal. . . .

It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain production of aircraft. . . .

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[9]Hisatsune Sakomizu, "Survey of Natural Resources as of 1-10 June 1945," included as Appendix A-2 in The United States Strategic Bombing Survey, Japan's Struggle to End the War (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1946), 16-18.

F. National Living Conditions

1. Foodstuffs. The food situation has grown worse and a crisis will be reached at the end of this year. The people will have to get along on an absolute minimum of rice and salt required for subsistance considering the severity of air raids, difficulties in transportation, and the appearance of starvation conditions in the isolated sections of the nation. . . .

2. Living conditions. From now on prices will rise sharply bringing on inflation which will seriously undermine the wartime economy. . . .

2. The author of the next selection is a native-born, white American woman from Tennessee who, in 1931, met, fell in love with and married a young Japanese diplomat. She lived through the war years in Japan with her husband and young daughter. After the war she described her experiences in a revealing book, from which the three brief passages presented below portray incidents which took place in 1944 and early 1945:[10]

/This selection indicates the quiet desperation of the Japanese people toward the end of the war. Despite broadcasts of victories, the people were becoming more and more resigned to ultimate defeat and child employment, the increase in beggars and the arming of the people with bamboo spears were all telling signs./

D. Judgment After the Fact

The United States Strategic Bombing Survey was established by Presidential order toward the end of the war to investigate the effects of our aerial attacks on Germany and Japan. The Survey's inquiries in Japan included interrogations of more than 700 leading figures of the Japanese government, armed forces and industry. It also recovered and

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[10]Gwen Terasaki, Bridge to the Sun (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1957), 134,135, 148-150.

translated many documents, such as the Sakomizu report presented above. The report from which the following selection has been drawn presented the Survey's final conclusions as to the various factors which contributed to Japan's surrender:[11]

1. Blockade of Japan's sea communications exploited the basic vulnerability of an island enemy which, with inherently second-power resources, was struggling to enlarge its capabilities by milking the raw materials of a rich conquered area. . . . The blockade prevented exploitation of conquered resources, kept Japan's economy off balance, created shortages of materials which in turn limited war production, and deprived her of oil in amounts sufficient to immobilize fleet and air units and to impair training. . . . The direct military and economic limitations imposed by shortages created virtually insoluble political as well as economic problems. . . . The special feeling of vulnerability to blockade, to which a dependent island people are ever subject, increased and dramatized, especially to the leaders, the hopelessness of their position and favored the growing conviction that the defeat was inevitable.

2. While the blockade was definitive in strangling Japan's war mobilization and production, it cannot be considered separately from the pressure of our concurrent military operations, with which it formed a shears that scissored Japan's military potential into an ineffectual remnant. In the early engagements that stemmed the Japanese advance and in the subsequent battle for bases, the application of our air power . . . enabled us largely to destroy her navy and reduce her air forces to impotence before the home islands could be brought under direct air attack. . . . Japan's principal land armies were in fact never defeated, a consideration which also supported the military's continued last-ditch resistance to the surrender decision. It nevertheless appears that after the loss of the Marianas in July-August 1944, the military commands, though unconvinced of final victory, viewed defense against our subsequent operations as affording an opportunity for only a limited success, a tactical victory which might, so they hoped, have created a purchase from which to try for a negotiated peace under terms more favorable than unconditional surrender.

3. . . . The timing of the strategic bombing attack affected its role in the surrender decision. After the Marianas were lost but before the first attacks were flown in November 1944, Tojo had been unseated and peacemakers introduced into the Government as prominent elements. . . . These attacks became definitive in the surrender decision because

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[11]United States Strategic Bombing Survey, Japan's Struggle to End the War (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1946), 10-13.

they broadened the realization of defeat by bringing it home to the people and dramatized to the whole nation what the small peace party already knew. They proved day in and day out, and night after night, that the United States did control the air and could exploit it... . .

4. When Japan was defeated without invasion, a recurrent question arose as to what effect the threat of a home-island invasion had had upon the surrender decision. It was contended that the threat of invasion, if not the actual operation, was a requirement to induce acceptance of the surrender terms. On this tangled issue the evidence and hindsight are clear. The fact is, of course, that Japan did surrender without invasion, and with its principal armies intact. . . . The responsible leaders in power read correctly the true situation and embraced surrender well before invasion was expected.

5. So long as Germany remained in the war that fact contributed to the core of Japanese resistance. . . . The significant fact, however, is that Japan was pursuing peace before the Nazis collapsed, and the impoverishment and fragmentation of the German people had already afforded a portent of similar consequences for an intransigent Japan.

6. The Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs did not defeat Japan, nor by the testimony of the enemy leaders who ended the war did they persuade Japan to accept unconditional surrender. The Emperor, the Lord Privy Seal, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the Navy Minister had decided as early as May of 1945 that the war should be ended even if it meant acceptance of defeat on allied terms. The War Minister and the two chiefs of staff opposed unconditional surrender. The impact of the Hiroshima attack was to bring further urgency and lubrication to the machinery of achieving peace, primarily by contributing to a situation which permitted the Prime Minister to bring the Emperor overtly and directly into a position where his decision for immediate acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration could be used to override the remaining objectors. Thus, although the atomic bombs changed no votes of the Supreme War Direction Council concerning the Potsdam terms, they did foreshorten the war and expedite the peace. . . .

Based on a detailed investigation of all the facts and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved, it is the Survey's opinion that certainly prior to 31 December 1945, and in all probability prior to 1 November 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.

SECTION III

WAS THERE A BETTER WAY TO WIN THE WAR?

As the time drew near for the final showdown with Japan, Americans were considering two proposals for inducing the Japanese to surrender. The hope was that the invasion of Japan and use of the atomic bomb on a Japanese city might both be rendered unnecessary. One of the proposals discussed in this section was advocated by some, but not all, of the atomic scientists. It won the support of some important political figures as well. The other proposal was suggested by a respected diplomat with long experience in Japan. His idea came to be espoused by several top leaders including the President.

This section presents these two fateful discussions as they took place, along with some afterthoughts from both the American side and the Japanese. Whether either proposal or both might have worked will forever remain one of the history's most tantalizing questions.

A. The Agony of the Atomic Scientists

No more fearsome specter haunted the Allied statesmen of World War II than the possibility that Germany might be first to produce an atomic weapon. Germany had led the world in nuclear physics since the turn of the century. After the advent of Hitler in 1933, there were indications that the Nazi regime was sponsoring a secret atomic research project.

Actually a number of Germany's top scientists went into exile during the 1930's. Some were dismissed from German universities and laboratories because they were Jewish and hence anathema to the anti-Semitic Nazis. Others resigned and left Germany voluntarily rather

than serve the Nazi regime. The pattern was repeated elsewhere in western Europe as the Nazi drive for world conquest gained ground in the late 1930's and early 40's. Still, enough first-class scientists did remain in Germany to keep the danger of a Nazi A-bomb ceaselessly alive in the minds of Allied war planners.

It was the refugee scientists in the West who played the leading role in the development of the bomb. The brilliant roster included among others: Niels Bohr of Denmark; Albert Einstein, James Franck, Eugene Wigner, and Hans Bethe of Germany; Leo Szilard and Edward Teller of Hungary; and Enrico Fermi of Italy. The historic first step was a letter drafted by Leo Szilard, signed by Albert Einstein, and addressed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on August 2, 1939. It informed the President that recent discoveries indicated that a new form of energy might now be derived from atomic fission; that this atomic energy might be usable in an incredibly powerful new weapon; that the Germans might already be developing such a weapon; and that the U. S. government should therefore take steps to encourage atomic research. Out of this letter eventually came the top-secret, two-billion-dollar "Manhattan Project" which, nearly six years later, produced the bomb.

But in early 1945, when the bomb was still several months from completion, startling news reached the scientists. Special teams of investigators, racing into Germany with advance units of Allied troops, had discovered that the Germans were not even close to developing an atomic bomb. For some of the very scientists who had contributed most to creating the bomb, there began a grave crisis of conscience. With Germany out of the war and Japan visibly weakening, might not some

alternative be found to prevent their monstrous brainchild from being unleashed upon the world?

1. The atomic scientists discussed this problem at all of the bomb's far-flung installations, but the chief center of agitation was the Metallurgical Laboratory at the University of Chicago. Here, on June 11, 1945, the seven scientists of the Committee of Social and Political Implications, headed by Nobel Prize winner James Franck, produced what has become the most celebrated protest statement of the period. Noteworthy among its signers was Leo Szilard, the man who with Einstein had fathered the whole project. Franck went to Washington and tried to present the petition personally to Secretary of War Stimson, but the latter was out of town and the petition had to be left with one of his assistants.[1]

> /The scientists argue against a surprise atomic bomb attack on Japan and recommend a demonstration of the bomb "before the eyes of representatives of all the United Nations, on the desert or a barren island."/

2. Perhaps the most brilliant galaxy of scientific talent ever assembled was that which worked at the super-secret atomic bomb laboratory high atop a mesa at remote Los Alamos, New Mexico. Here too the scientists debated how and whether the bomb should be used, but no concerted action was ever taken. Edward Teller, a key physicist at Los Alamos and later famous as "father of the H-bomb," here indicates at least part of the reason.[2]

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[1] Committee of Social and Political Implications, "Before Hiroshima: A Report to the Secretary of War, June 1945," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Vol. I, No. 1, May 1, 1946, 2, 3-4, 16.

[2] Edward Teller, with Allen Brown, The Legacy of Hiroshima (Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1962), 13-14.

/Teller expresses regret that he did not go against Oppenheimer's advice and circulate to all the Los Alamos scientists Szilard's petition against a surprise attack on Japan. He suggests that a very high-altitude nuclear explosion would have prompted Japanese surrender after threatened with a low-altitude explosion next, and that this could have been achieved with a loss of no lives./

3. In May 1945 President Truman appointed a high-level "Interim Committee," with Stimson as chairman, to advise him on all implications of atomic energy. A distinguished Scientific Panel of atomic specialists was set up as consultant to the Committee: Arthur H. Compton, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi, Ernest O. Lawrence. The Interim Committee and Scientific Panel held their first joint meeting on May 31, 1945.

In the following excerpt from his memoirs, Compton, a member of the Scientific Panel, recalls the discussions on that occasion. He then goes on to describe the ensuing controversies that split wide open the tight little community of atomic scientists.[3, 4]

/After an intensive investigation it was decided by the Interim Committee that there seemed to be no acceptable alternative to "direct military use" of the bomb. Counter-petitions from scientists both for and against military use of the bomb, or against an attack without prior demonstration, were circulated. One opinion poll of the scientists was taken that indicated that 87% were in favor of military use of the bomb, at least after other means of getting a surrender were tried. Compton agreed with this position when the question was put to him by Washington./

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[3]Arthur H. Compton, Atomic Quest (Oxford University Press, New York, 1956), 238-244, 246-247.

[4]Henry L. Stimson, "The Decision To Use The Atomic Bomb," Harper's Magazine 194 (February 1947), 101.

4. The scientists' agitation for a warning before use of the bomb was soon reflected elsewhere in the government. Lewis L. Strauss, then a Navy Department official, later Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, was an active advocate of the idea. Within the Interim Committee, whose June 1 recommendation was unanimous in favor of dropping the bomb without warning, sentiments like those of the Franck Report began to be heard. On June 27 Undersecretary of the Navy Ralph A. Bard delivered the following memorandum to the Interim Committee thereby becoming the only member of that Committee to dissent formally from its recommendation:[5]

> /Bard proposes a meeting with representatives of the Japanese government "somewhere on the China coast" in which the Japanese could be informed about Russia's position, the proposed use of the atomic bomb and assurances with regard to treatment of the Emperor and Japanese nation following unconditional surrender./

5. In this case as in all others, the final decision devolved upon President Truman:[6]

> /Truman relates the conclusions of the advisory committee of scientists and the Interim committee that the bomb should be used on a military target without prior warning and asserts that he regarded the bomb as a military weapon and "never had any doubt that it should be used."/

B. The "Unconditional Surrender" Problem

By the spring of 1945 the more realistic among Japan's leaders had recognized that their military fortunes were worsening rapidly. They

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[5] "Was A-Bomb on Japan a Mistake?", August 15, 1960.

[6] Harry S. Truman, Year of Decisions (Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1955), 419.

began to cast about for some means to end the war but still hoped to avoid total humiliation by obtaining negotiated peace. This plan faced one great obstacle: America's spokesmen had insisted ever since Pearl Harbor that "unconditional surrender" was the only peace offer they would consider.

1. Early in July, after some desultory Japanese peace feelers through Sweden and Switzerland had evoked no response, Japan decided to request the Soviet Union to mediate with the Allies. At that time the Russians were still neutral in the war against Japan. None of Japan's leaders knew that the Russians, at American insistence, had already promised to enter this war.

The following are excerpts from the supposedly secret dispatches by Japanese Foreign Minister Togo to his ambassador in Moscow, dated July 11 and 12, 1945[7] Many similar messages were sent in the ensuing weeks. A crucial point to keep in mind is that the Americans had broken Japan's secret codes early in the war, and hence were able to intercept and decode all such messages. Throughout the weeks leading up to Hiroshima, President Truman and the other American statesmen were aware of Japan's increasingly desperate but unavailing efforts to negotiate. No direct response was ever made to these overtures.

> The foreign and domestic situation for the Empire is very serious, and even the termination of the war is now being considered privately. Therefore . . . we are also sounding out the extent to which we might employ the U.S.S.R. in connection with the termination of the war . . . meet with Molotov immediately . . . please explain our attitude as follows . . .

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[7] Potsdam Papers, I, 874-876.

"We consider the maintenance of peace in Asia as one aspect of maintaining world peace. We have no intention of annexing or taking possession of the areas which we have been occupying as a result of the war. . . .

"His Majesty the Emperor is greatly concerned over the daily increasing calamities and sacrifices faced by the citizens of the various belligerent countries in this present war, and it is His Majesty's heart's desire to see the swift termination of the war. In the Greater East Asia War, however, as long as America and England insist on unconditional surrender, our country has no alternative but to see it through in an all-out effort for the sake of survival and the honor of the homeland. . . ."

2. No American thought more deeply about the demand for unconditional surrender and its probable effect on the Japanese than Joseph C. Grew. He had been United States ambassador to Japan during the ten years leading up to Pearl Harbor. Throughout the war he served as a key diplomatic adviser to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman. His proposal and the fate it suffered raise interesting questions about complex processes of high-level decision-making:[8, 9]

> /Grew discusses his attempts to get the American government to state to the Japanese that their surrender did not mean the end of the present dynasty if the people desired its retention. Such a statement, he felt, would have hastened surrender, but the timing never seemed appropriate, as under certain circumstances such a statement might have appeared to be "a confession of weakness."/

3. Secretary of War Stimson reflects on the Grew proposal:[10]

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[8]Joseph C. Grew, Turbulent Era, Walter Johnson, ed. (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1952), II, 1421-1426.

[9]A quotation in the selection was taken from a letter to Mr. Henry L. Stimson, February 12, 1947.

[10]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service, 622, 628-629.

/Stimson notes his agreement with the Grew proposal but also relates how such a statement would have rubbed some high officials the wrong way and be interpreted as appeasement. Although there were some indications of a weakening in the Japanese resolve, it was felt that this was the time to push toward victory with all possible means. Stimson admits that the decision "on the question of the Emperor," might be looked upon by history as a factor in prolonging the war./

4. Harry Truman had only been President three months when he attended the Potsdam Conference (July 17-August 2, 1945) as one of the "Big Three" in the formidable company of Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin. On some important questions Truman tended to rely on the advice tended by Churchill, who was vastly more experienced in this arena. The British Prime Minister related the advice he gave on the problem of unconditional surrender and stated his confident expectations as to the intentions of American statesmen on this problem, expectations subsequently unfulfilled:[11]

/Churchill indicates his belief, after discussions with Truman, that the United States would not insist on a Japanese "unconditional surrender."/

5. The man who may have played the most crucial behind-the-scenes role in these discussions was Cordell Hull. He had been Secretary of State for eleven of the twelve years of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency, retiring in November 1944 for reasons of ill health. In his Memoirs, Hull related:[12]

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[11]Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 641-642.

[12]Cordell Hull, Memoirs (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948), II, 1593-1594.

/Hull relates his experience in advising Secretary of State Byrnes to not allow for the continuance of the Emperor in the Potsdam declaration as it would seem too much like appeasement and to delay its release until after the "climax of Allied bombing and Russia's entry into the war." He notes that he received a statement from Byrnes which was in basic agreement with him on these points./

6. One of President Truman's closest advisers, James F. Byrnes, was named Secretary of State early in July, 1945 on the eve of the Potsdam Conference. Fifteen years later he defended his attitude on this question in an interview published in U. S. News and World Report:[13]

/Byrnes claims that no guarantee had been made to keep the Emperor as an institution and that any such guarantee would probably not have helped to open negotiations sooner./

C. The Potsdam Declaration and the Japanese Reaction

1. The final product of these many-sided deliberations was the Potsdam Declaration, issued on July 26, 1945. The words used in it--and even more significantly the words not used--have become one of the most controversial issues in modern history.[14]

PROCLAMATION CALLING FOR THE SURRENDER OF JAPAN, APPROVED BY THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, CHINA, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM . . .

(1) We, the President of the United States, the President of the National Government of the Republic of China and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, representing the hundreds of millions of our countrymen, have conferred and agree that Japan shall be given an opportunity to end this war.

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[13] U. S. News and World Report, August 15, 1960, 66-67.

[14] Potsdam Papers, II, 1474-1476.

(2) The prodigious land, sea and air forces of the United States, the British Empire and of China, many times reinforced by their armies and air fleets from the west are poised to strike the final blows upon Japan. This military power is sustained and inspired by the determination of all the Allied nations to prosecute the war against Japan until she ceases to resist.

(3) The result of the futile and senseless German resistance to the might of the aroused free peoples of the world stands forth in awful clarity as an example to the people of Japan. The might that now converges on Japan is immeasurably greater than that which, when applied to the resisting Nazis, necessarily laid waste to the lands, the industry and the method of life of the whole German people. The full application of our military power, backed by our resolve, will mean the inevitable and complete destruction of the Japanese armed forces and just as inevitably the utter devastation of the Japanese homeland.

(4) The time has come for Japan to decide whether she will continue to be controlled by those self-willed milita/r_/istic advisers whose unintelligent calculations have brought the Empire of Japan to the threshold of annihilation, or whether she will follow the path of reason.

(5) Following are our terms. We will not deviate from them. There are no alternatives. We shall brook no delay.

(6) There must be eliminated for all time the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest, for we insist that a new order of peace, security and justice will be impossible until irresponsible militarism is driven from the world.

(7) Until such a new order is established and until there is convincing proof that Japan's war-making power is destroyed, points in Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies shall be occupied to secure the achievement of the basic objectives we are here setting forth.

(8) The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.

(9) The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives.

(10) We do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as /a_/ nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon

our prisoners. The Japanese government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established.

(11) Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those industries which would enable her to re-arm for war. To this end, access to, as distinguished from control of raw materials shall be permitted. Eventual Japanese participation in world trade relations shall be permitted.

(12) The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as these objectives have been accomplished and there has been established in accordance with the freely expressed will of the Japanese people a peacefully inclined and responsible government.

(13) We call upon the Government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces, and to provide proper and adequate assurances of their good faith in such action. The alternative for Japan is prompt and utter destruction.

2. Foreign Minister Togo's account of the frantic intrigues and debates that erupted within the Japanese government when the Potsdam Declaration was issued may be helpful in evaluating the potential effectiveness of the two proposals which, as we have seen, were not explicitly included in the Declaration:[15]

> [Togo relates the internal workings in the Japanese government between the time of the receipt of the Potsdam Declaration and the Japanese surrender. Although he had favored a "wait and see" policy upon receiving the Declaration, the more militant elements persuaded the Premier to publicly reject it. This led to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and, after debates between the militant and moderate elements of the government which are detailed, eventual surrender of the Japanese government.]

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[15] Shigenori Togo, The Cause of Japan (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1956), 311-321.

SECTION IV

WAS RUSSIA THE REAL TARGET?

A number of writers have asserted that America's true motives for using the atomic bomb were more anti-Soviet than anti-Japanese. This charge of "atomic blackmail" is repeated from time to time by the Russians and their allies throughout the world.

Section IV opens with a well-known early statement of the accusation, supplemented by a more recent, slightly different version. These are followed by a representative sampling of the evidence upon which the charge is based. The section concludes with a brief opposing statement.

A. The Accusation

1. In 1948, the same year in which he wrote the book from which this selection is taken, Patrick M. S. Blackett, one of Britain's foremost atomic scientists, won the Nobel Prize in physics. He has since written and lectured widely on nuclear weapons control.[1]

> [Blackett contends that if saving American lives was a major goal then there was no reason why the American government could not wait before dropping the A-bomb on Japan and see if the Japanese peace proposals made through Russia were not acceptable and until the Russian offensive against Japan had run its course. He claims that the bomb was dropped when it was in order to make sure that the Japanese government surrendered to the United States alone. Blackett concludes, therefore, that the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan was actually "the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress."]

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[1] Patrick M. S. Blackett, Fear, War and the Bomb (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1949), 130-132, 134-135, 139. Originally printed in England in slightly different form under the title Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy (The Turnstile Press, London, 1948).

2. The author of this 1965 version of the anti-Soviet charge has worked in Washington, D. C. for a number of years, part of the time as assistant to a United States Senator.[2]

> /The author, Gar Alperovitz, takes the position that though the atomic bomb was not used to keep the Russian army out of Manchuria, or even to win the war since it could be won by other means, it was used in order to impress Russia and, thus, make them "more manageable in Europe."/

B. The Evidence

1. This first group of documents presents the views of American military and naval commanders on the question of Soviet entry into the war against Japan. The United States had actively sought this since 1943 at least, for reasons which General Douglas MacArthur outlined to Secretary of the Navy James A. Forrestal in the first document cited below:[3]

> /MacArthur was of the view that the Russians should be encouraged to prosecute the war against Japan in Manchuria in order to keep the Japanese army occupied on the Asian mainland so that American forces could more easily attack the Japanese home islands with "the assurance that the Japanese would be heavily engaged by the Russians in Manchuria."/

By late spring and summer 1945 the situation was drastically altered, Germany had surrendered, and Japan was beleaguered in her home islands. In his memoirs published in 1964, MacArthur expressed an attitude on the Russian question sharply revised from that reported

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[2]Gar Alperovitz, Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1965), 239-242.

[3]The Forrestal Diaries, edited by Walter Millis with the collaboration of E. S. Duffield (The Viking Press, New York, 1951), 31.

by Forrestal. His expressions of dismay over the concessions made to the Russians at the Yalta Conference should be considered in light of the fact that Yalta was held in February, the same month he was expressing the views noted in the preceding document.[4]

> /MacArthur contends that there was no need of Russian intervention in the Pacific in 1945 and is quoted as being shocked that we would make so many concessions to them (at Yalta) in order to get their participation in the Pacific theater./

There were those who did declare their opposition to Russian participation as early as the Yalta Conference. Among them was Admiral Leahy. Here he expresses his views as of February 1945, and then goes on to make some points about the negotiations at Yalta, incidentally illuminating the interdependence of problems in widely separated parts of the world:[5]

> /Leahy makes it clear that, although he did not feel it was necessary to have Russian aid in order to defeat the Japanese, he does not think that we made any "dangerous concessions" to the Russians in order to get their participation./

At a crucial meeting of President Truman and his chief military and naval advisers, held at the White House on June 18, 1945 General Marshall stated the Army's attitude:[6]

> With reference to clean-up of the Asiatic mainland, our objective should be to get the Russians to deal with the Japs in Manchuria (and Korea if necessary). . . .

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[4]Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences, 261-262.

[5]William D. Leahy, I Was There, 293, 317-318.

[6]Potsdam Papers, I, 930-931.

An important point about Russian participation in the war is that the impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation at that time or shortly thereafter if we land in Japan.

Also attending this meeting was Admiral King, the Navy's commander-in-chief. He agreed with Marshall in principle, but

said he wished to emphasize the point that, regardless of the desirability of the Russians entering the war, they were not indispensable and he did not think we should go so far as to beg them to come in. While the cost of defeating Japan would be greater there was no question in his mind but that we could handle it alone. He thought that the realization of this fact should greatly strengthen the President's hand in the forthcoming conference.

In mid-July General Dwight D. Eisenhower, at that time Supreme Commander of the Allied forces in Europe, conferred informally with the President at Potsdam:[7]

> /Eisenhower advised Truman that we should not be put in a position of asking the Soviet government for aid since it appeared Japan's collapse was imminent and he "foresaw certain difficulties arising out of such participation."/

2. The next group of documents illustrates the attitudes toward Russia of some influential American political leaders.

On this issue as on so many others, Secretary Stimson was among the first to consider post-war as well as immediate implications.[8]

> /Stimson discusses the question of whether the atomic bomb should be shared with other nations and, after detailed considerations, concludes that we should not share the information on the bomb with the U.S.S.R. unless the Russians give positive indications of implementing a democratic government as described in the Soviet Constitution of 1936./

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[7]Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe (Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, 1948), 441-442.

[8]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service, 634-641.

Shortly before James Byrnes was appointed Secretary of State, he had a meeting with three atomic scientists. The group was headed by Leo Szilard, the physicist who had helped launch the Manhattan Project but also was now leader in the scientists' movement to deter the government from using the bomb. According to Szilard's account, from which the following is excerpted, the interview provided significant testimony relating to the problem we are considering.[9]

> [Szilard recounts a discussion with Byrnes in which Byrnes mentioned that using the bomb on Japan was not necessary to win the war but that a demonstration of the bomb could make Russia more manageable in Europe. Although Szilard agrees with the first view he expresses strong disagreement with the second. He notes how dismayed he was when Byrnes became Secretary of State.]

Byrnes never made any secret of his feelings about the Russians, as his memoirs amply demonstrate. The two incidents he describes in these excerpts took place during the Potsdam Conference.[10, 11]

> [Byrnes discusses the implications of the development of the atomic bomb for the entry of the Russians into the war against Japan. He notes that such a development made it unnecessary to get the U.S.S.R. into the war but since they would probably enter anyway they had better be told of the A-bomb development. He relates how Truman told Stalin and how mild Stalin's reaction seemed to be. Byrnes concludes that Stalin did not grasp "the full import" of Truman's statement, though others felt that he already knew about the new weapon through the Soviet intelligence service in the United States.]

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[9]Leo Szilard, "A Personal History of the Bomb," The University of Chicago Roundtable, September 25, 1949, 14-15.

[10]James F. Byrnes, All in One Lifetime (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1958), 297, 300-301.

[11]The Forrestal Diaries state at page 78: "Talked with Byrnes, now at Potsdam . . . Byrnes said he was most anxious to get the Japanese affair over with before the Russians got in, with particular reference to Dairen and Port Arthur. Once in there, he felt it would not be easy to get them out."

Earlier we noted Winston Churchill's delight when the news of the successful Alamagordo test of the atomic bomb was received at Potsdam. Greatly relieved as he was at this elimination of the necessity for the invasion of Japan, he had other grounds for satisfaction, as this excerpt from his memoirs reveals:[12]

> /Churchill expresses delight that the development of the atomic bomb obviated the entry of the U.S.S.R. into the war against Japan, thus preventing the necessity of invasion of Japan with a "protracted slaughter" and allowing European problems to be faced "on their merits and according to the broad principles of the United Nations."/

President Truman sums up his feelings at the end of the Potsdam Conference where he experienced his first face to face encounter with the Russians. There is considerable food for discussion to be gleaned from a careful comparison of this statement with some of those preceding:[13]

> /Truman notes that a primary purpose of his trip to Potsdam was to get Russia to commit itself to entry into the war against Japan, which was obtained easily. He also reflects on the feeling he had that the Russians were not really interested in post-war peace but were trying to press for every advantage they could get. This caused him to conclude that Russia should not get "any part in the control of Japan."/

C. An Attempted Verdict

An American historian who had written a series of detailed studies of Far Eastern Diplomatic relations in World War II here attempts to strike a balance between the charge and the evidence:[14]

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[12]Winston Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, 639.

[13]Harry S. Truman, Year of Decision, 411-412.

[14]Herbert Feis, Japan Subdued: The Atomic Bomb and the End of the War in the Pacific (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1961), 181-182.

/Feis states that it is possible, but it is only conjecture, that the decision to use the bomb was based as much on the attempt to monitor "emergent Russian aggression" as on the goal of defeating Japan. Even in recognizing this tendency, however, Feis contends that the major goal of the United States was to achieve a peaceful and stable post-war world./

SECTION V

WAS IT A MORALLY DEFENSIBLE ACT?

The American conscience has never ceased questing for answers to the ethical dilemma posed by Hiroshima. As we have seen, many of those who participated in the making of the bomb and in the decision to use it have felt obligated to justify their actions. In the ensuing years others have sought to analyze the problem in the light of generally accepted moral principles.

The first group include documents which speak to the question as to whether the public conscience changed during a decade of war. A statement by President Truman comprises Part B. Part C presents the afterthoughts of four atomic scientists. Finally in Part D five military men of World War II express their feelings.

A. Public Conscience in a Decade of War

1. On August 30, 1936, in the early stages of the Spanish Civil War, a single plane bombed Madrid. There were casualties, but no one was killed. The world was nonetheless horrified at the thought of a great metropolitan center being attacked from the air.

Nine years later, it was also a single plane that bombed Hiroshima.

Between these two events lies the bloodiest era in human history. The conscience of mankind was ceaselessly assailed by evermounting horrors in every quarter of the globe. Hiroshima cannot be properly understood outside this historical setting.

Following are a selection of headlines from the New York Times,

interspersed with excerpts from editorials,[1] which reflect the attitude evolving in America toward the bombing of cities. Note that the dates of the headlines are one day later than the events described.

> [The series of Times headlines and editorials relate the mounting destruction in property and lives caused by bombings between 1936 and 1945, but, at the same time, the declining horror and shock with them. They end with an editorial in the Times that speaks of the holocaust of Hiroshima with militant, patriotic pride.]

2. Shortly after the end of the war, a survey was taken of the American public's attitudes toward the use of the atomic bomb against Japan; Americans were asked to select one of the indicated choices.[2]

> [The survey indicates that a majority (53-55%) of Americans agreed with the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is also notable that 22.7% said that we should have used more bombs than we did before Japan's surrender, while only 4.5% said that we should not have used any atomic bombs at all.]

3. American public feeling about the Japanese was manifested in the popular songs of the era. One of the best-known had the following simple but significant lyrics, sung to a rousing martial tune:[3]

> [The song, entitled Let's Remember Pearl Harbor, appeals to Americans to remember that Americans died for liberty at Pearl Harbor and that they should keep this in mind "and go on to victory."]

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[1] All headlines in this section are taken from Page 1 of The New York Times on the following dates: Aug. 30, 1936; Oct. 31, 1936; Nov. 1, 1936; Dec. 3, 1936; Sep. 9, 1937; Sep. 20, 1937; Sep. 23, 1937; Sep. 24, 1937; Sep. 25, 1937; Sep. 26, 1937; Sep. 1, 1939; Sep. 2, 1939; Sep. 3, 1939; Sep. 5, 1939; Aug. 16, 1940; Aug. 25, 1940; Aug. 28, 1940; Aug. 29, 1940; Sep. 8, 1940; Sep. 29, 1940; Dec. 8, 1941; Dec. 26, 1941; Dec. 28, 1941; June 1, 1942; June 2, 1942; Ju. 28, 1942; May 18, 1943; Ju. 31, 1943; Aug. 2, 1943; Aug. 25, 1943; Apr. 30, 1944; Ju. 7, 1944; Mar. 10, 1945; Mar. 12, 1945; Mar. 14, 1945; Mar. 15, 1945; Mar. 17, 1945; May 24, 1945; May 25, 1945; May 26, 1945; May 29, 1945; May 30, 1945; Aug. 1, 1945; Aug. 2, 1945; Aug. 3, 1945; Aug. 5, 1945; Aug. 7, 1945.

[2] "The Fortune Survey," Fortune, 32:305 (December 1945).

[3] Melrose Music Corp., 31 West 45th Street, New York City.

4. The author of the book from which the following selection was drawn is a Protestant clergyman in America and an authority in the field of Christian social ethics.[4]

> /Batchelder states that the decision to drop the atomic bomb was based on military rather than political considerations. He notes, however, that there was an alternative: to demonstrate the bomb in order to prod the Japanese into surrendering. He relates how Stimson was swept into the decision because it appeared to be the "least abhorrent choice." Although a formal moralist would have judged the decision to use the bomb as being immoral, Batchelder contends that the utilitarian moralist would consider such a view as "too simple." The most significant question is whether it is "right to perform an inherently immoral act in order to achieve a good end and avoid a massive evil," in this case continued fire raids and an invasion of Japan which would have lengthened the war and caused even more deaths./

5. On the twentieth anniversary of Hiroshima, Pope Paul VI made the statement described in the following New York Times story:[5]

> /Pope Paul VI is quoted as hoping that the use of the atomic bomb would have no lasting negative effects on the world and prays that it will never be used again./

B. The Conscience of the President

What may be termed the official American justification for Hiroshima was summarized in the press release issued by President Truman immediately after the bombing.[6]

> Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. . . .

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[4]Robert C. Batchelder, The Irreversible Decision 1939-1950 (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1961), 211-219.

[5]The New York Times, Aug. 9, 1965, 1-2.

[6]Potsdam Papers, II, 1376-1378.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. . . .

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East. . . .

By 1942 . . . we knew that the Germans were working feverishly to find a way to add atomic energy to the other engines of war with which they hoped to enslave the world. But they failed. We may be grateful to Providence. . . .

We have now won the battle of the laboratories as we have won the other battles. . . .

What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history. It was done under high pressure and without failure.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. . . .

I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.

C. The Conscience of Science

There is an irony worth considering in the fact that two of the earliest and severest critics of the decision to use the bomb were the two scientists whose 1939 letter to President Roosevelt started atomic bomb research in this country.

1. Albert Einstein may be said to bear a double responsibility for the atomic bomb. First, it was his epoch-making announcement of the "special theory of relativity" in 1905 that launched the atomic age. He startled the world by proving that matter and energy are equivalent and interchangeable. The atomic bomb may be described as a demonstration of his theory, for its explosion results from a conversion of matter into energy. And second the 1939 letter bore his signature.

After the war Einstein played a leading role in the scientists' movement for nuclear weapons control. In 1946 he gave the interview from which this statement is excerpted:[7]

> [Einstein discusses the possibility that the decision to drop the atomic bomb was a "fatal error, for men accustom themselves to thinking a weapon which was used once can be used again." He makes the case for having demonstrated the bomb and renounced its use as "too terrible," and contends that this decision would have helped us in negotiations and demonstrated our sincere intentions of developing "these newly unleashed powers for good."]

2. We have already encountered Leo Szilard at several points in this unit. You will remember that he drafted the 1939 letter for Einstein's signature. A brilliant nuclear physicist in his own right, he shares credit with Enrico Fermi for achieving at the University of Chicago in December 1942 the world's first controlled self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction. The interview excerpted below took place in 1960:[8]

> [Szilard recounts his past opposition to the use of the atomic bomb on Japan and his unsuccessful attempts to stop its use. He notes that the decision to drop the bomb shattered his pre-war illusion that the United States acted to some extent on moral considerations as well as considerations of expediency. He now feels that all nations, barring none, act on considerations of expediency in times of crisis.]

3. J. Robert Oppenheimer was director of the atomic bomb laboratory at Los Alamos and a member of the Scientific Panel which unanimously

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[7]Albert Einstein, in an interview with Michael Amrine, "The Real Problem Is In The Hearts Of Men," The New York Times Magazine (June 23, 1946), 7, 43.

[8]"Was A-Bomb on Japan a Mistake?" U. S. News and World Report (August 15, 1960), 68-70.

recommended use of the bomb without a warning demonstration. He was interviewed in 1965.[9]

> /Oppenheimer states that he does not regret having worked on the development of the atomic bomb and that, though he believes Truman was in error in not letting the talks between Russia and Japan continue and in not giving a clearer warning, he regrets it was not developed two years earlier in order to save lives. He feels that the bomb's existence reduces the chances of World War III./

4. Luis W. Alvarez played a major role in the Los Alamos laboratory, helped assemble the two atomic bombs for the flights to Japan, and flew aboard the B-29 Enola Gay on its bomb-run over Hiroshima.[10]

> /Alvarez asserts that the decision to drop the bomb was the correct one as it saved about a million lives and helped diminish the risk of World War III. He, therefore, takes pride in his part in the program./

D. The Conscience of Soldiers

1. General Eisenhower described his feelings about the atomic bomb shortly before Hiroshima:[11]

> /Eisenhower recounts how he told Stimson that he hoped the atomic bomb would never have to be used against an American enemy because he did not want the United States to "take the lead in introducing into war something as horrible and destructive" as the bomb was described to be./

2. Lieutenant General Leslie R. Groves directed the entire 2-billion-dollar Manhattan Project which produced the atomic bomb. These excerpts are from a 1965 interview:[12]

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[9]William L. Laurence, "Would You Make the Bomb Again?", New York Times Magazine (August 1, 1965), 8.

[10]Ibid., 53.

[11]Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe, 443.

[12]William L. Laurence, "Would You Make the Bomb Again?", New York Times Magazine (August 1, 1965), 9.

/Groves raises the point that it would have been immoral not to have used the bomb as it was needed "to save American lives."/

3. In an earlier section of this unit, Admiral Leahy, Chief of Staff to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, expressed his opposition to use of the bomb on military grounds. Here he registers a vigorous protest to its use on moral grounds:[13]

/Leahy argues that by introducing the bomb first we had reverted to ethical standards that were "common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages."/

4. Abe Spitzer was a B-29 radio operator who flew both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki missions. In a book published the following year, Spitzer recorded his own and his buddies' reactions:[14]

/The reactions of Spitzer's buddies are full of doubts and vague regrets. Spitzer concludes that he is not proud of himself for his part and hopes such incidents as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima will never be repeated./

5. Less than a month before Hiroshima, the Japanese announced the formation of a People's Volunteer Corps, making all men from 15 to 60 and women from 17 to 40 liable for defense duties. One American reaction to this news, probably typifying the feelings of many men in the armed services and even of the general public, was the following statement. It appeared in an official Army Air Force publication about

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[13]William D. Leahy, I Was There, 441-442.

[14]Merle Miller and Abe Spitzer, We Dropped the A-Bomb (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1946), 151-152.

two weeks before the atomic bomb was dropped.[15]

> /The author of the selection contends that "there are no civilians in Japan" and that the ultimate aim is to seek out and destroy the enemy, which in this case is the entire population of Japan," in the greatest possible number, in the shortest possible time."/

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[15]Col. Harry F. Cunningham, A-2 of the Fifth Air Force (Fifth Air Force Weekly Intelligence Review, No. 86, 15-21 July 1945), cited in The Army Air Forces in World War II, V, 696-697n.

SUGGESTIONS FOR READING

The most popular account of how Hiroshima's people were affected by the bomb is John Hersey's Hiroshima* (New York, 1946). A Japanese doctor's experiences are related by M. Hachiya in Hiroshima Diary (Chapel Hill, 1955). In Nuclear Disaster, Tom Stonier describes the probable effects of a thermonuclear bomb on an American city, (New York, 1963). The feel of battle is vividly conveyed in D. Congden (ed.) Combat: Pacific Theatre* (New York, 1958).

Opposing views on the military controversy can be found in H. W. Baldwin, Great Mistakes of the War (New York, 1950) and Louis Morton (ed.) Command Decisions (New York, 1959).

The story of the scientists who made the bomb is excitingly told in Robert Jungk, Brighter Than a Thousand Suns* (New York, 1958) and in the more recent but also more expensive Day of Trinity (New York, 1965) by Lansing Lamont. The same story is viewed from a more personal angle in Atoms in the Family* (Chicago, 1954), by Laura Fermi, wife of Enrico Fermi. A superior novel about atomic scientists is C. P. Snow, The New Men (New York, 1955).

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists is the most consistently provocative periodical in this field; its best pieces from 1945 to 1962 have been collected by Grodzins and Rabinowitch in The Atomic Age (New York, 1963). The thesis that the scientists' protests were prevented from reaching President Truman is argued by Fletcher Knebel and Charles Bailey in Look Magazine, Aug. 13, 1963. The entire Aug. 1, 1965 issue

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*Available in paperback edition.

of The New York Times Magazine is devoted to the 20th anniversary of Hiroshima.

Longer excerpts from some of the works cited in this unit, and some sources not cited here, are in Edwin Fogelman, Hiroshima: The Decision to Use the A-Bomb* (New York, 1964).

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*Available in paperback edition.